

A new eco-social contract for social and environmental justice – transformative elements for the 2nd World Summit for Social Development

WHO Global Knowledge Network for Health Equity on Unpacking
Social Protection for Health Equity

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A world in state of fracture

- Multiple interconnected crises (economic, environmental, social and political) threaten SDG achievement, reverse past development gains and lead to erosion of trust, credibility and legitimacy of governments and multilateral governance: our social contract is broken.
- Rising inequalities within and between countries and entrenched intersectional inequalities affect the most vulnerable and marginalized groups and undermine poverty reduction, democratic governance and efforts to address the environmental crisis.
- SDGs are largely off track: only 35% of targets on track or showing moderate progress

What the 2nd World Summit for Social Development Offers

- The UN convenes the 2nd WSSD in Qatar, in November 2025, to address the gaps and recommit to the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action and its implementation, and give momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda
- It is an opportunity to rethink social development and position it firmly on political agendas, to take stock of the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action after 30 years, and to realign behind the goals of **poverty eradication, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and social integration**
- The Copenhagen Declaration calls for universal access to social protection and social services, including quality health services and social health protection for all
 - What are the lessons learned in achieving these goals over the past 3 decades?
 - What needs to be done to advance on social development and UHC in a challenging context?

A new eco-social contract for people and planet

- We need a new social contract that delivers on equity, inclusion and human rights and establishes a contract for nature, an ecological-social contract
- It needs to be based on broad participation and democratic processes, creating a consensus on principles/objectives, and means of implementation (policies, institutions and finance)

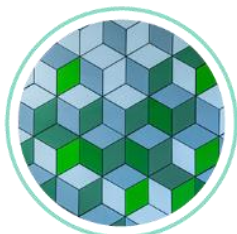


How Would a New Eco-Social Contract Be Different?

7 Principles for building a new eco-social contract



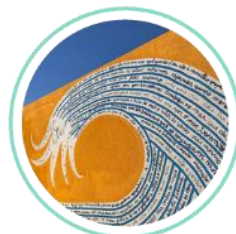
**Human
rights
for all**



***Progressive
fiscal
contracts***



***Transformed
economies
and societies***



**A
contract
for nature**



**Historical
injustices
addressed**



**Gender
justice**



Solidarity



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Moving towards new eco-social contracts: A new global compact for universal health

- **Universal social policy is the high-road strategy to achieve** affordable universal health care for all. Public universal health services and social health insurance pools resources and risks and maximizes efficiency and effectiveness.
- An enabling economic context and universal social policy, comprising social protection, social services and labour market policies, as well as integrated care systems, **can best address the social determinants of health**, combined with a health in all policies approach.
- Social policy needs to be understood to contribute to **broader development goals**, including growth, equality, well-being and social cohesion. It promotes production, redistribution, reproduction and protection. It is an essential pillar of inclusive social contracts and should be grounded in human rights and be based on sustainable/equitable financing mechanisms.
- Recent UNRISD research focuses on an **integrated approach towards social and environmental determinants of health**, as part of our work on eco-social contracts.
- A **global compact for universal health** could be part of new eco-social contracts
- Regulations and policies at the national/regional level need to be grounded in human rights, accountability mechanisms, global and national solidarity and redistribution
- Powerful elites and international actors such as multinational companies need to be re-incorporated into bargains for economic, social and environmental justice. Powerful private actors exercise considerable influence on global health governance and health provisioning at national level and require greater regulation and accountability.

References and further reading

- [UNRISD 2022 Flagship Report: Crises of Inequalities: Shifting Power for a New Eco-Social Contract](#)
- [Research and Policy Brief 39: Crises of Inequalities: Shifting Power for a New Eco-Social Contract](#)
- [Global Study on New Eco-Social Contracts](#)
- [Issue Brief 11: A New Eco-Social Contract: Vital to Deliver the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)
- [Blog: Joining Up the Dots Between Social and Climate Justice: Time for a New Eco-Social Contract](#)
- Mackintosh, Maureen and Meri Koivusalo (eds.). 2005. Commercialization of Health Care. Global and Local Dynamics and Policy Responses. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan and UNRISD.
- Leppo, Kimmo; Eeva Ollila, Sebastian Pena, Matthias Wismar and Sarah Cook (eds.). 2013. Health in All Policies: seizing opportunities, implementing policies. Helsinki: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.
- Yi, Ilcheong (ed.). 2017. Towards Universal Health Care in Emerging Economies: Opportunities and Challenges. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan and UNRISD.



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